

“What Do We Believe? – Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary” Matthew 1:18-25

Central Thought: *The Holy Spirit conception and virgin birth of Jesus impacts how we are born, live and die.*

What do we believe?

- 1) In what ways was Jesus born?
 - Firstborn over all creation. Colossians 1:15
 - Firstborn over **many** brothers and sisters. Romans 8:29
 - Firstborn from among the **dead** – firstfruits of the resurrection. Revelation 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:15
 - Conceived by the Holy Spirit – fully God.
 - From the womb of Mary – fully man.
- 2) How was Jesus conceived by the Holy Spirit?
 - God **commandeered** the biological process He had created. Luke 1:34-35
 - God **interrupted** the race of the first Adam to introduce the race of the second Adam. 1 Corinthians 15:45
 - As a result Jesus was born **sinless** as fully God and fully man.
 - There is a “new line” for mankind to get back to the Father.
 - Faith in the first Adam leads to death.
 - Faith in the second Adam leads to eternal **life**.
- 3) Why did Mary have to be a virgin?
 - Credibility – to remove any suspicion of human involvement.
 - **Divinity** – to remove the possibility of a father other than God.
 - **Humanity** – to engage biological birth enough to be fully human.
 - Biology – to interrupt the normal biological process by which sin is transferred.
 - **Regeneration** – to create a second Adam using the means of the first Adam.

What does this mean?

- 1) This Jesus is no **ordinary** religious leader.
- 2) This Creed is no **religious** exercise.
 - It is a reminder of something central to our living and destiny. Galatians 2:20
 - This truth is non-negotiable – if it is not true, our entire faith falls.
 - New birth parallels Christ’s birth and the first Creation.

How do we respond to this?

- 1) Have I been **born** again of the Holy Spirit? John 3:3-7
- 2) Is Jesus more than religion? Philippians 3:7-10
- 3) Is Jesus “another thing” in life or is He my life? Galatians 2:20
- 4) Is following this Jesus a privilege or a **duty**?

Word bank: *born, commandeered, dead, divinity, duty, humanity, interrupted, life, many, ordinary, regeneration, religious, sinless*

For reflection and Life Group facilitation:

- 1) What does it mean to you to be “born again” of the Spirit? When did this happen for you?
- 2) Jesus’ birth in the flesh changed Him forever. What has your “new birth in Jesus” changed in you? What things still need to change in you?
- 3) Which is more of a miracle to you – physical birth or spiritual re-birth in Christ? Why?
- 4) Why might it be easy to dismiss this truth as “something for the theologians”?